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Quick Strokes

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A new hub for the wheel of progress

Oregon is first again. Quick Strokes received word that a group of interested people recently met for the purpose of forming an organization to promote the Dvorak keyboard. From this meeting was born the Dvorak International Federation. This represents a group of concerned people who feel the timing is right for a change to Dvorak, for a number of significant reasons. One is the availability of a researcher, Brad Lessley, who has recently completed his doctorate on "Keyboard Retraining: Qwerty to Dvorak". The State of Oregon is so impressed with the new method of retraining and the Dvorak keyboard itself that the Governor of the state just launched a pilot project to retrain eighty state typists, emphasizing the opportunity for increased productivity while reducing fatigue. Lessley will be the project leader.

At the first meeting of the Dvorak International Federation a constitution was adopted, a slogan "DIF Makes the Difference - an Oregon Drama" was selected, officers were elected, a logo was selected and a mailing list for interested people is being formulated.

Dvorak International Federation is a voluntary organization of concerned citizens who feel that more than a century of frustration, typist fatigue, tax waste and excess cost is just too much. Anyone interested in receiving further information about the Federation, Lessley's thesis and the changing Oregon drama, contact Helen Baldwin, Dvorak International Federation, P.O.Box 19542, Portland, Oregon 97219.

Editor, Quick Strokes,

Please place my name among your subscribers and find my enclosed check in the amount of five dollars.

I have been an ASK typist since '76, when I retrained myself from Qwerty. I now offer it to my typing students and have increasing numbers studying it. Sixteen were on ASK this last semester.

With the cooperation of SCM I offered both ASK and Qwerty electric machines to a group of 20 sixth-grade students this spring semester. The results were most interesting and are being prepared for publication.

A. C. Kolb, typing instructor at Carmel Middle School, Carmel CA 93921

Dvorak design principles applied to a set of 2,000 characters

The objective of A Human Factors Study of Input Keyboard for Japanese Text, by Yamada-Hisao and Jiro Tanaka, is to determine the best approach to a Japanese typewriter which will be utilized in the manner of an English-language typewriter in the United States.

The 18-page report was presented at a computer symposium in Taipei, Taiwan, in December, 1977, and is published by the Department of Information Science at the University of Tokyo, Hongo, Bunko-ku Tokyo, 113 Japan.

The language of the report is good, plain English, although some of the items in the bibliographic references are in Japanese. Section VIII, Transfer and Retroaction Surface of Learning, is hard to follow without some knowledge of method and theory in experimental psychology, but Section IX elucidates it, and the references are helpful.

Several of the authors and sources cited are familiar to readers of Quick Strokes.

The solution to the problem of efficiently carrying on correspondence in Japanese by typewriter is to use two strokes for each character. The effect would be comparable to Dvorak input in English, because each character expresses a syllable.

Howard M. Hudson, a Cauthen at the keyboard

"I am a court reporter who does all his own transcription of testimony notes, which runs anywhere from 300 double-spaced pages to 500 pages a week." This is from Howard M. Hudson, affiliated with Childers & Shelnut, Marietta, Georgia.

After 15 months on an ASK arrangement of characters on his keyboard, part of the time at a reduced pace, Hudson now cruises at the 170-word-a-minute pace which he had maintained for many years at keyboards arranged according to the original Dvorak-Dealey Simplified diagram.

Hudson's pace is four or five times the pace of a hired transcriber at a qwerty keyboard. It is probably twice the pace of a reporter or a hired reader producing a voice tape, which still has to be transcribed at a keyboard.

A court reporter normally spends from 30 to 50 per cent of his billing, for transcription. Hudson spends for equipment and supplies, but surely not 30 per cent of his income.

Long days and long weeks are a part of the verbatim reporting profession. Hudson's days and weeks, however, are apparently not so long or so arduous as those of reporters who cling to qwerty or to voice tapes, and his net income is much higher.

Call Hudson's speed fantastic if you wish -- but not incredible. His colleague at the trade, Mr. Dan Buxton, of Seattle, Washington, reports essentially the same performance.

A nod from the New York Times and the New School for Social Research

Under "by" line of John Culkin and head "QWERTY and Beyond", the New York Times of March 15, 1978, carries a feature which remarks that "... the common keyboard is programmed for inefficiency." Culkin is executive director of the media-studies program at the New School for Social Research.

Mistakenly, he interprets "ASK" as "American Standard" Keyboard. Rightly, he recounts the triumphs of Dvorak-keyboard competitors in international contests of the 1930s and early 40s and

(See page 4)

For beginners, quick competence!

For the competent, quick excellence!

For excellers, greater excellence!



This is the recommended variant of the fast, accurate, easy, and famous Dvorak keyboard arrangement, available on a three-week delivery schedule on the Coronamatic 8000, which is the office model shown below,



and on the Electra Automatic, a portable, likewise from the SCM corporation, which, with 42 pairs of characters, still is ASK as far as it goes. Other portable models, other variants of the two-hand Dvorak arrangement, and both the Dvorak one-hand arrangements are available with a longer lag.

Speedy Keyboard Enterprises, Inc.
Box 643
West Sacramento, California 95691
Telephone 916-446-3377

 ASK portables for immediate shipment
 B. W. Adams, 4 Park Ave., RD 1,
 Scarborough, ME 04074

the success of the navy's civilian re-trainees of 1946. Wrongly, he ascribes the instruction or the leadership in that demonstration project to the late Captain and Professor August Dvorak.

The story is illustrated with a photo of "the latest entry in the field," the PCD-Maltron keyboard. The locations of the characters do not come out very clearly, but Quick Strokes knows what they are and wonders in what way Mr. Culkin thinks it "improves statistically on Dvorak's placement".

Statistically, the Maltron is sadly deficient in rhythm; empirically, it has no Buxton, Blackburn, or Hudson to confirm its efficiency. It never will have one. On Maltron, every verb that

ends in inning, eigning, enning, aining, anning, or inging and many other words besides contain six successive strokes with the same hand, the left, and the right side has similar concatenations.

How to subscribe

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Governor of Oregon

The name of the Oregon governor is Robert W. Straub.

Our nominee for high office

Ronald Watson reports publications on Dvorak keying in eight Australian periodicals since Christmas.

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